http://www.MSCNews.net/news/index.cfm?nk=68824

Social Security Launches New Campaign to Fight Scammers

The Social Security Administration and its Office of the Inspector General (OIG) continue to receive reports about fraudulent phone calls from people falsely claiming to be Social Security employees. The scammers mislead victims into making cash or gift card payments for help with purported identity theft, or to avoid arrest for bogus Social Security number problems.

If a suspicious caller states there is a problem with your Social Security number or account, hang up and never give the caller money or personal information. You can go online to www.oig.ssa.gov to report the scam call to Social Security.

Also be on the lookout for a new version of this scam. Fraudsters are now emailing fake documents in attempts to get people to comply with their demands. Victims have received emails with attached letters and reports that appear to be from Social Security or the OIG. The letters may use official letterhead and government jargon to convince victims they are legitimate; they may also contain misspellings and grammar mistakes.

Social Security employees do occasionally contact people--generally those who have ongoing business with the agency--by telephone for business purposes. However, Social Security employees will never threaten a person, or promise a Social Security benefit approval, or increase, in exchange for information or money. In those cases, the call is fraudulent, and people should just hang up.

Generally, the agency mainly calls people who have recently applied for a Social Security benefit, someone who is already receiving payments and requires an update to their record, or a person who has requested a phone call from the agency. If a person is not in one of these situations, they normally would not receive a call from the agency.

If there is a problem with a person's Social Security number or record, in most cases Social Security will mail a letter. If a person needs to submit payments to Social Security, the agency will send a letter with instructions and payment options. Never provide information or payment over the phone or Internet unless you are certain of who is receiving it.